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The Spectator

Thursday, December 7, 2023

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Publishing the Truth, From Good Motives and For Justifiable Ends

Bias remains in Hamilton's faculty evaluation processes

by Kristina Meyers '27
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Students are asked to complete evaluations of their professors during finals week each semester, but a plethora of new research has emerged in recent years regarding bias in these evaluations. This raised alarm bells across academia as faculty evaluations carry a lot of weight and are traditionally used to evaluate if a professor will receive tenure. Professors' performance evaluations leave their jobs at stake.

When the troubling news broke, Economics Professor Ann Owen and 44 other professors joined together in the Fall of 2019, forming the Committee on Evaluative Teaching (CET) to address this recent revelation. Inclusivity was a focus during the development of this committee, Professor Owen explained during an interview with *The Spectator*. "Any faculty member who wanted to be on the committee could self-nominate themselves," Professor Owen explained, meaning they "weren't telling anybody who thought this was important that they couldn't participate."

The CET got to work to create a holistic and transparent approach to the teaching evaluation system. One of the biggest changes was the introduction of a new system in which, Owen explaind, "any conclusions you draw about a person's teaching, to the extent that you can, you should corroborate them with other information." This began the process of using other resources like a faculty members syllabus for the class, personal statements, peer reviews and eliminating the "purpose to compare people" from surveys. These new changes were implemented to minimize the amount of bias that was cropping up in these surveys.

The committee spent months gathering research from student surveys. This included tweaking the timing of the survey process, like having some students complete the surveys the following semester rather than

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

Professor Owen looks into evaluation bias.

during finals season. (Though only a fraction of students actually completed the surveys a semester later, it seems finals-season surveys are here to stay). The types of questions and survey styles were adjusted, tested and evaluated as well.

This culminated into two prime recommendations: to make "peer review more consistent, fair and transparent and then making improvements to tenure promotion guidelines to increase consistency and transparency," Professor Owen said. While things can be done to improve the bias in survey outcomes, it might not be eradicated completely. "The only thing our committee has been trying to do is remove it [implicit bias] and in fact… it doesn't matter and it is there no matter what we do," Owens said.

However, students can be more mindful in their responses to reduce bias. Thorough, detailed responses are best. Students should remember which factors (like class time, for example) the professor cannot control. One can also note of their own personal bias based on the grade received in a course or level of effort put into the class.

Faculty evaluations matter not only to the professors who are up for tenure but also those already tenured. Professors genuinely consider and reference these surveys when tweaking their curriculum and teaching style. Owens recommended students reference the document attached to the email from the Registrar's Office if they're unsure what to write in their responses.

The community reflects on Jodel shooting threat

by Owen Lewis '24
INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER

On Sunday, April 16, 2023, Hamilton students saw a post on the anonymous social media app, Jodel: "I want to shoot up KJ." One student quickly showed the post to Campus Safety, who notified Campus Safety Director Frank Coots. A four-hour shelter-in-place followed, after which campus was secured, but a crucial communications error led to many students fearing for their lives during those four hours: a campus alert message indicated that there was an active shooter rather than a threat. During the lockdown, students hid in classrooms and peed in cups–one hunkered down in a closet. Armed police officers secured KJ and the surrounding buildings, patting students down along the way. By the time of the all-clear, campus had been secured and perpetrator Peter Ashby Howard III was arrested shortly after, but for many, trauma had set in, fears were awakened and a sense of security was shattered.

Despite no bullets being fired, the ugly shadow of gun violence hangs over the event. Guns are so destructive, shootings in America so frequent, that the very possibility of the threat being credible brought about a four-hour lockdown.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BILLY MARIN '25.

Campus community members reacted to a post made on anonymous platform Jodel.

Story continued on p. 6.

Former members of Congress talk polarization and partisanship in Washington, D.C.

by Stella Essenmacher '25
STAFF WRITER

On Monday Dec. 4, Common Ground featured Congresswoman Val Demings and Senator Roy Blunt in an event entitled "Taming the Chaos: Can We Bridge the Divides in D.C.?" Well-known broadcast journalist, Steve Scully moderated the discussion.

The night opened with a broad question, regarding the possibility of compromise and action in D.C., given the fact that the 118th Congress is by all metrics one of the least productive in modern history.

Blunt joked: "They haven't done anything since we've left...people don't run for work anymore, they run for the fight." Blunt commented that "it is antithetical to democracy. That you're insistent that it is either your way or no way. That is not how a democracy should work."

Demings agreed with Blunt. "There are a number of people there who have no interest in the government. They're not there to pass legislation. They're not there to compromise." The two agreed that many political leaders in Washington lack both passion and an earnest interest in achieving compromise.

Responding to a question on the health of American democracy, Demings insisted "Some may argue that democracy is powerful but it is fragile." Blunt challenged the notion that democracy is in danger, a belief that widely animates current political discourse. "I think that democracy is strong. I think that the country is strong. I think frankly we were much more divided in the 60s over Vietnam, over civil rights." Scully challenged this assertion, arguing that the rise of the media has revolutionized the political arena and fueled hateful ideas in a way that makes the current political division unique.

PHOTO BY NANCY L. FORD

Journalist Steve Scully (Right) moderates Common Ground discussion between former Senator Roy Blunt of Missouri (Left) and former Rep. Val Demmings of Florida (Middle).

Shifting to a critical assessment of the American voting system, Blunt criticized the early voting system: "I don't agree that anybody should be able to vote whenever they want...the best time to vote is on Election Day. Early voting only helps the incumbent." Demings defended early voting, arguing that limiting the voting window to one day silences the votes of many Americans, particularly marginalized individuals who don't have the ability to leave their jobs to cast ballots.

Blunt shared his concern for the excessive government spending: "You can't spend that amount of money and not have economic impact." He expressed concern about Biden's handling of economic issues such as inflation and rise in interest rates. Demings responded: "If inflation is lower than it was a year ago then it is definitely going in the right direction." "It is cumulative, you got to remember that," Blunt challenged.

Blunt shared concerns about the future of public servantry, stating, "I am concerned about it- that we're making public service so difficult and unappealing for individuals and the families that they're a part of." Demings agreed, but she also reminded the audience of the individuals who have fought for Americans right to engage in the political process: "There has not been a single movement in this country that young people have not been a part of. We needed you and we will continue to need you."

Demings concluded: "We live in the greatest country in the world, with all of our imperfections and our problems. But it didn't just happen overnight because we willed it. It happened because men and women who believed in the greater good."

PHOTO BY NANCY L. FORD

Senator Roy Blunt represented Missouri in the Senate from 2011 to 2023. He served as the Republican Whip for six years between 2003-2009. Blunt is an executive fellow at the Bipartisan Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

PHOTO BY NANCY L. FORD

Representative Val Demings served the tenth district of Florida in Congress for three terms. She previously served as Chief of Police for the Orlando Police Department. Demmings was on the shortlist for Vice President for the Biden Administration. People have wondered if she will run for governor of Florida.

Faculty series highlights Shaker community

by Sarafina Madden ’26
STAFF WRITER

As a part of the new Lunch Series, “Celebrating Faculty Achievements,” Christian Goodwillie, LITS Director and Curator of Special Collections at Burke Library, delivered a talk on his recently published book, *Richard McNemar: Frontier Heretic and Shaker Apostle*, which follows the life of Richard McNemar, the leading publishing spokesperson for the Shaker community.

The Shaker community, founded in 1747, centers on egalitarian ideals and espouses leading a simple life by abstaining from sex and living community. Richard McNemar played a key role in spreading public awareness of the Shaker community. The community fell under public and legal scrutiny, rendering McNemar’s writings fodder in public’s accusations against Shakers. Tactfully untangling the complexities of the masses of manuscripts and historical records of Mcnemar’s life, Goodwillie’s biography illuminates a narrative of McNemar’s career and the legacy he left on Shakerism and American religion.

Explaining the story of his interest in Shakerism, Goodwillie recounted hitting the open road with a college friend to see another utopian community in Tennessee when the ended up staying in a small Shaker community for the night.

Goodwillie became engrossed by the Shakers’ radical gender politics and revolutionary view of God. “The people were celibate, and had communal property and thought that God was male and female, and I mean. It was just like I’d never thought about any of this stuff before, and I thought it was so fascinating.” Returning from his road trip, Goodwillie’s interest only grew, and he has dedicated 10 years to the telling of Richard McNemar’s story.

Reflecting on the process of writing his book, Goodwillie shared the difficulties he experiences pouring over masses of manuscripts in search of answers and meaning. “There were nearly a hundred letters. Four very dense journals. And then tens of printed publications…that was just his papers. Then there were all the papers of all the communities he lived at.” He shared his experience researching at the Library of Congress in D.C.: “And I just set up there on a table and not even with my phone, but with a digital camera, photographed every single page of all those documents.” Printing out the pictures, ordering them and finally engaging in painstaking analysis, Goodwillie’s research proved cumbersome and rife with obstacles. His biography sent him traversing the country, visiting sites in Ohio, Kentucky, Massachusetts and Maine.

Goodwillie has written a total of 12 books, two of them being preparatory to this biography. In those two books, Goodwillie translated the text of Shaker’s hymns to musical scores, turning blocks of lyrics into tune with musical scores underlaid with lyrics. “You’re bringing something back to life that no one has heard for 200 years,”said Goodwillie.

Goodwillie insisted on the value in studying Utopian communities at large: “These are groups of people who have intentionally separated themselves from the larger society and they’re doing it for a reason..what you find in these groups is they are hotbeds for social experimentation and this is usually in a really progressive way.”

Tracing the history of Shakers in the court of public opinion, Goodwillie said: “I look at the Shakers, who in the eighteenth century were physically attacked because they were dancing in worship...and by the twentieth century they’re national icons and their material culture is being documented by our own federal government.”

Pharmacuetical company has roots on the Hill

by Mia Antonini ’26
STAFF WRITER

On Nov. 28, Hamilton Alumni and Parent Relations hosted “Bristol Myers Squibb, Hamilton, and a Long Pharmacopeia” led by Professor Mackenzie Cooley, Assistant Professor of History and Director of Latin American Studies at Hamilton. The event took place virtually on Zoom and over 35 people attended.

Cooley shared her research on the genesis of Bristol Myers Squibb, which was founded by two Hamilton alumni, William McLaren Bristol, class of 1882 and John Ripley Myers, class of 1887. It was originally called Clinton Pharmaceuticals Company and based out of the second floor of the building now home to Clinton’s popular Utica Coffee shop.

The “first breakthrough product” of Bristol Myers was their Sal Hepatica salts, meant to ease constipation while mirroring many of the qualities of a bohemian spa’s natural mineral waters.

What is known today as Bristol Myers Squibb, explained Cooley, was founded in 1887 by Myers and third generation Hamiltonian Bristol after they took over a “failing drug manufacturing business” called the Clinton Pharmaceutical Company. The company eventually moved to Syracuse and then Brooklyn, and, in 1899, changed their name to “Bristol, Myers Company.”

Hamilton’s connection to the pharmaceutical company continued to remain strong, as Bristol’s son, Henry Platt Bristol, class of 1911, took over as president after his father, beginning the post in 1927.

Alongside an incredibly thorough and well-organized presentation regarding Hamilton’s relationship with Bristol Myers Squibb and the history of the company itself, Cooley invited the audience to reflect on larger questions about the pharmaceutical industry as a whole. “Like most pharmaceutical projects, the drugs created by [Bristol Myers Squibb] often relied, and indeed, do rely, on natural products…,” she said. “How, we might ask, have these drug development products extracted medically potent materials from living nature and how have they recorded these efforts?”

While Cooley admits she doesn’t have “a systematic answer to this question” she does explore the findings of her archival research, carried out with the support of Jeremy Katz, Hamilton’s archivist. Their deep-dive into Hamilton’s collection revealed significant information about the pharmaceutical company and its history, especially its relationship to the College and information on its key founders.

Cooley also introduced herself and her research foci to the audience, highlighting her interests in the study of ideas, and her courses, including “The Scientific Revolution: Making Knowledge in the Early Modern World,” and an advanced seminar she will offer titled “Bioprospecting and Ecologies of Medicine.” “I teach courses on lots of different projects relating to the history of ideas,” she says, which cover a range of time periods. She goes on, “I’m really interested in where brilliant innovations come from and the interplay between society and individuality in creating inspiration and in creating big ideas.”

She also expressed a profound gratitude for her students who have supported her along her research and aided in her process. “Teaching here at Hamilton, I’ve really had the opportunity to work through some of these ideas, in Kuwait though they might be, with some of our brilliant students,” she said.

EDITORIAL

December 7, 2023

Dear Hamilton Community,

Finals week is upon us! As we gear up for this final push of the semester, *The Spectator* team wants to extend our heartfelt encouragement to each and every one of you. Thank you to everyone who has read along with and contributed to our publication this semester—we are super excited to keep the ball rolling in 2024 with more upcoming projects. If you are headed home early, we wish you a safe trip and a restful break!

As several of our finest editors are heading abroad in the spring, we would like to acknowledge our appreciation for all of the work that each memebr has put in to make this semster's publications as dynamic as they were. In particular, we wish to thank Anoushka, Nikki, Sadie, Mika, Billy, Alison and Alex—we look forward to welcoming them back next school year.

We would also like to congratulate our incoming Co-Editor-in-Chief, Gregoire Winston, on his move up! As our staff will attest, Greg's tenacity in the newsroom, his extraordinary wit and his personable nature will make him a fantastic fit for this new role.

If you are interested in joining *The Spectator* team next semester as a Staff Writer, Copy Editor or Photographer, email us at spec@hamilton.edu. We are also still on the hunt for a Marketing Director to connect with our local community and nearby businesses to assist in building our Advertisements section.

Spec podcasts are here! Search History is hosted by Stella O'Brien '24 and Hannah Joblons '24, where our hosts dive into the quirky corners of their curious minds. The Arts & Entertainment podcast, hosted by Max Bratter '25 and Allen Underwood '25, spotlights up-and-coming artists and comments on the contemporary music scene. Scan the QR codes below to listen!

Sincerely,
The Spectator

The Spectator

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Celebrating 157 years,
we *were first published as* The Hamilton Campus *in 1866.*

The Spectator's Letter to the Editor section is designed to be a forum for the entire Hamilton community to discuss and debate campus, local, national, and global issues. Pieces published in the section express the opinion of the individual writers and are not necessarily the opinions of *The Spectator*, its editors or the Media Board.

Letters to the Editor are welcome from all students, alumni/ae, faculty, friends of the college, and Hamilton community members.

The Spectator has the following policies for submission:

1. Submissions are due by 10:00 p.m. on the Monday before publication. The editors reserve the right to refuse any late submissions.
2. Letters should be no longer than 500 words. The editors reserve the right to cut off letters at 500 words.
3. Letters submitted anonymously will not be printed.
4. *The Spectator* reserves the right not to publish any letter it deems inappropriate for publication.
5. If a piece is determined to be libelous, an unwarranted invasion of privacy, or an unnecessary and/or unwarranted ad hominem or personal attack, it will not be published.

About Us

The Hamilton College Spectator, *publication number USPS 612-840, is published weekly by the Hamilton College Student Media Board while classes are in session. For more information e-mail spec@hamilton.edu. Our offices are located on the second floor of the Sadove Student Center. The deadline for advertisements is Monday the week of publication. For further information, please e-mail specads@hamilton.edu.*

December 7, 2023

Hamilton Club Figure Skating Team hosts first-ever winter holiday showcase

by Erin Delaney ’26
STAFF WRITER

PHOTO COURTESY OF @hamiltoncollegefsclub ON INSTAGRAM

Figure Skating Team poses for a group photo at Sage Rink. The team captioned the image “Happy World Skating Day!!! Thanks to everyone who came to support our team today!!!!”

Hamilton’s Club Figure Skating Team held a festive winter showcase at Sage Rink on Sunday, Dec. 3. Many Hamilton students and families were in attendance at the rink, which was adorned with holiday colors, props and decorations. There were 13 routines performed by members of the figure skating team as duets or solos. The showcase ended with a *Mean Girls*-inspired routine to “Jingle Bell Rock,” which was performed by most of the figure skating team.

The showcase displayed a wide range of skating styles and holiday song choices, including graceful movements in Anni Ojanen ’26’s “Walking in the Air,” playful humor in Julia Smith ’25’s and Eve Karmozyn ’25’s “Medley from The Grinch,” impressively strong technique in Maggie Mieczkowski ’25’s “Nutcracker Medley: Arabian and Pas de Deux” and contagious energy in India Macdonald ’27 and Reilan Garczynski ’26’s “You Make Every Day Feel like Christmas.”

Co-Captains Julia Smith and Maggie Mieczkowski have been involved with Club Figure Skating since their freshman year. As the new co-presidents of the team this year, they decided they wanted to start a holiday showcase to get back into performing for campus-wide events.

Preparation for the showcase began in Sept., when the club started having regular practices to choreograph routines and worked with Steph Kowell, Assistant Athletics Director for Fitness & Recreation, to organize the event. Many members choreographed their own original routines or adjusted past competition programs to fit their chosen holiday song. For beginner skaters, Smith and Mieczkowski helped choreograph and teach their routines.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @hamiltoncollegefsclub ON INSTAGRAM

Flyer advertises Winter Showcase to campus.

Once choreography was learned and taught, Smith says the club “did run-throughs of everyone’s program each practice so that people could get comfortable in their routines and in performing for an audience.” Smith wrote a script to introduce each skater before their routine, which Christina Spanier ’25 and Emily Ferguson ’24 announced during the show.

Smith says a big part of getting ready for the show was the holiday decor. “We had crafting nights twice a week to make all the decorations, and tried to have team members come in at least once to make something to hang on the boards or put on the ice,” she said. “Actually, all of the presents were boxes that we stole from the mail center!”

The team meets on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays for two-hour practices. Mieczkowski says they spend practice time “doing group exercises at the beginning of practice and then give everyone time to work on their own [exercises].” Once competition season begins next semester, the figure skating practices will mainly consist of “learning programs and working on skating skills, jumps, spins and choreography,” says Smith.

According to the captains, there is a “great deal of comradery among the members” that grew as a result of spending so much practice time together. Smith says that she and Mieczkowski have “tried to foster a supportive environment” in the team. Since the team does not currently have a coach, the captains provide most of the coaching and support to the other members. Mieckowski encourages skaters of all levels to join the club, as the goal is to “provide the opportunity for people who might not have the resources to learn how to skate.” Smith says that as someone who began figure skating her freshman year, she was able to improve as much as she did because of “how willing everyone on the team was and is to help me try new things and correct mistakes.”

The Club Figure Skating Team will be performing at the Citrus Bowl and Winter Classic next semester.

Although locks have been added to doors and more than seven months have passed, the event remains a painful reminder to many students of the constant threat of gun violence in the United States. In this oral history, students and staff reflected on their thoughts, fears and feelings brought about by the events of April 16.

I: "This was the first time all year that I had studied in KJ."

Isa Cardoso '25: That was April 16, which is my birthday. It was the opening weekend of *Rent*, in which I was playing Mimi.

Hadley Noonan '25: It was kind of a normal Sunday. It was near the end of the semester, so things were just starting to wrap up. I'd been in KJ basically all day, just doing homework. Around 4 p.m., I had a sorority meeting. It was supposed to be an hour long.

Cole Kuczek '23: Before the response came in, I was working in the OCC, in KJ, since I was on shift that night.

Cardoso: I got out of rehearsal and met up with a friend to study in KJ, because I had a lot of work to do. I was really behind. We sat in one of the study rooms that has the glass facing McEwen–which we rarely ever get. This was the first time all year that I had studied in KJ. I never study in KJ. Until that day.

Campus Safety Director Frank Coots: I was notified by the campus safety officer working dispatch. He had texted me the photograph of the Jodel post. You have that moment when you try to rationalize things, and you're like, 'this doesn't mean anything!' And then I realize, 'no, this is a threat to the campus, and I was hired to keep the campus safe.' We literally have a button in campus safety, and you push it for an emergency. I said, 'you push that button.'

New York State Police Captain Jason Place: I was the incident commander for this event. My wife is an Assistant Dean—she was notified and mentioned it to me. I also saw a Kirkland PD car go lights and siren past my house towards the College at about the same time.

Noonan: The message they sent made it sound like someone had pulled one of those blue light things on campus. For some reason, the way they worded it, I kind of thought of something like that—someone had seen something, or been approached in a way that made them uncomfortable, so we were precautionarily staying in place.

Coots: We notified everyone for shelter-in-place. That is the one and only thing that we do. We don't go to lockdown, we don't go to lockout, we don't go to run away, we don't do any of that. We simply say, 'shelter in place. We need you to be as safe as possible in the environment in which you're located. If you're outside, get inside. I don't care where you go. If you're not on campus, don't come back to campus. If you're in a building, if you're in a classroom, if you're in your dorm room, lock the door. Barricade the door.'

Place: I ordered my personnel to the scene, spoke with Director of Campus Safety, Frank Coots, on the phone, notified my superior, then suited up and responded.

Cardoso: We got the text first, that was like, 'shelter in place. Get away from windows.' And we were like, 'shit, this isn't a great spot to be in!' We just assumed that it was a tornado warning sort of thing. We grab all our stuff, with a sense of urgency but not fearing for our lives. We start booking it, and we're like, 'the safest place to be right now if there's a tornado is KJ basement.' We're speed-walking to the stairs to go to the basement, and we look out the window, and it's perfectly clear outside.

II: "There are things that no college kid should be asked to think about."

Ethan Daves '23: When I was walking past Opus [FoJo Beans], we got the text saying, 'active shooter, go to the nearest building.' Of course I didn't want to go into Opus, because it's just open windows. So I went into KJ.

Cardoso: My friend and I were both RAs, so we were getting texts in our RA group chat that somebody had threatened to 'shoot up KJ' on Jodel. And when we saw those texts, we started getting really afraid.

Daves: It definitely got a lot more stressful when they sent the text out that said [the perpetrator] threatened KJ. [The stress] didn't really go down until they sent out the text that was, 'a threat of shooting,' not an active shooter. I think that's an incredibly huge distinction that they just didn't make for a long time.

Coots: We made a mistake. Of course we have boilerplate messages. We modify the body of the report, but unfortunately we forgot to modify the subject of the message, and it said 'active shooter on campus,' and it should have said, 'threat of violence on campus.'

Lelan O'Brien '23: The text about the active shooter was a guttural and traumatizing experience. I was less than two

PHOTO COURTESY OF DANI BERNSTEIN

An art installation created by Dani Bernstein '24 and Freya Langenberg '24 was posted outside KJ in the days after the shooting threat.

weeks away from commemorating the two-year anniversary of losing my father and family friend, who were killed by a mentally ill former employee on April 28, 2021. At the time, it sent my hometown of Watertown, New York into a lockdown and active shooter situation of their own, until their killer was found three hours later.

Noonan: Over time, we got so many texts. Every time they send you a text, they also call you, so we were just inundated with messages. They got more and more severe. I can't really remember the sequence of it. But at first, it was like, 'there is a threat on campus,' and then it was, 'there is an active shooter in KJ.'

O'Brien: I remember receiving the text at the exact same time as my friend, we read it simultaneously and I'll never forget the look on her face, having gone through the loss of my father with me just two years before. I remember she asked if I was okay, and we then both kind of stood up at the

same time to leave the store. I remember pretty dramatically crying and storming out of the store, and then my supportive friend offering to drive.

Coots: We keep sending you a message until you acknowledge that you've received it. Most people don't realize that they have to acknowledge it. You don't have to do it, but you're gonna keep getting the message until you acknowledge that you received it. So as you can imagine, I keep sending you the message, it says 'active shooter on campus,' you don't acknowledge it, and it keeps coming! 'There must be some truth to this! I keep getting told this!' We have since recognized that that's an issue. We have to be very careful about what we send out.

Noonan: It was hard to know what was really going on, because there weren't any adults. It's not like we were in a class or anything, so we were just fending for ourselves.

Place: Colleges are a unique challenge in these types of events. You have to combat a lot of misinformation being generated especially over social media both with on campus residents and concerned family and friends who are far away off campus. Communications can become very congested and unclear when 911 centers and campus dispatches become overwhelmed with non-essential communications.

Cardoso: If this person was on Jodel, and this person called the building 'KJ,' it was a student. All students have access to all residence halls until a certain time in the evening. So I could have gone in [to my residence hall], and a person with the intent to shoot me could have gone in right behind me.

Noonan: We were in this classroom where the doors opened the opposite way. Instead of pulling a closet door open, it pushes in. So you couldn't lock them, which was an issue. And because they were backwards, you couldn't really put anything against it, because it opened the other way.

Cardoso: We tried locking the doors, we couldn't lock the doors. The chairs in the KJ basement are bolted to the floor, so there was no way to block both doors.

Kuczek: I remember closing and locking the OCC door, and texting my friends to see where they were. Once they announced it was an active shooter, everyone in the OCC went into the conference room, put down the shades and barricaded the doors. Since the main room is all glass we had to leave there.

Noonan: There were 25 of us [in the room], probably, and then two or three girls who had been in the atrium who were told to find a classroom who just ran in. We didn't know them, really. It was definitely tough, people were reacting very differently. It was scary for everyone, obviously, but some people were really much more upset than others.

Place: The college community and the students did take this event seriously and did what they were instructed to, which really helped us move much faster in securing the campus and getting everyone back to their normal activity. The College did well communicating over multiple information streams in a timely manner and working with the police to share information. This is not an everyday event. I also know that they are constantly looking to improve their response capability, as are we.

Associate Vice President of Student Affairs Jeff Landry: As horrifying as the situation was, students did exactly what was needed: sheltered in place, were cooperative with the officers who were searching the buildings and most importantly, took care of each other during and after the incident.

Coots: We learned a lot of things that day, like that some of our classroom doors could not be locked. We've since fixed that, so every classroom door on this campus can be locked. That was important, and it should have been done before, but in a perfect world, we'd have all these things done.

Noonan: We were kind of like, 'all right. If something's gonna happen, it's gonna happen, because there's literally nothing we can do to protect ourselves.' In those classrooms, all the furniture is kind of bolted down, so there was nothing we could have moved anyway. It felt like no one from the school had considered all the things that could go wrong in a situation like this.

Professor of Philosophy Alexandra Plakias: I've heard from students who were in rooms, making plans for how to fight the person if they came into the room, or what they were going to do. At a certain point, there are things that no college kid should be asked to think about. No adult. Nobody.

Cardoso: We sat for a little while thinking that it would be safest to just stay where we were, but we just kept hearing more and more people running by KJ basement, and a group of girls was running, and they opened the door to the classroom really fast. We saw the group of girls, and that was really scary, and we were like, 'we have to leave.' We got our stuff together. We were speed-walking, but then eventually started jogging, and it was weird the way our bodies just kept getting faster and faster.

Kuczek: Once I was sitting down in the conference room, having my friends and maybe my mom text me wondering what was going on was quite scary. Because I had no idea if the situation was real or not. I also remember laying down at one point to get below the window and thinking if what was going on was really happening.

Coots: Nature calls. And they have to take care of having to urinate. 'I'm trying to be small, I'm trying to be quiet, but I really have to pee.' So you're going to pee in a cup. You're going to make sure that you are not drawing attention to you at all.

Caroline Hogan '26: When the police came, I honestly think that was the scariest part for me.

Noonan: Probably an hour and a half into the whole thing, someone was banging on the door and was like, 'FBI! Is anyone in here?' People were kind of fighting, like, 'no, we can't, you're not meant to let someone in. If it's FBI, they just come in.' Finally, someone was like, 'yeah, we're in here.' They came in. Five men with bomb jackets—whatever they're called—and huge guns came in. We all had to put our hands up, and they patted each of us down.

Hogan: There were three men, and they all had massive guns. It was very, 'whoa.' I don't know what the type of gun was, but it was certainly scary. They pat us down. They were very nice, very 'everything's all right.' Reassuring. But it was very scary.

Coots: The threat was specifically to Kirner-Johnson, KJ. Law enforcement's approach is that they have to secure the building. Sometimes they dynamically enter a classroom. When a room is entered dynamically, there's a lot of confusion. It's

very loud, it's very confusing, and it's very intimidating. Those students had to live through that. They are literally putting their hands up. It is like television. You are putting your hands up because you don't want to get shot.

Cardoso: We run out to the very end of Shambach, closest to Root, because we had a friend who was in her dorm there. We went to the furthest end where the stairs were, and we went up the stairs as quietly as we could, and I went in front of my friend. I'm doing the whole thing with my arms out in front of her. I peek my head out, and there's a kid, just walking, with AirPods in and a black hoodie on. I was like, 'this is it.' And he just kept walking. I was frozen in front of this kid. Because he was just walking as if he didn't know anything that was happening. There were alarms playing over every one of the speakers on campus, and yet this kid just has his AirPods in and a black hoodie and is just walking. I scanned his entire body to see if there was something that was going to hurt me, but no. And then I felt like a horrible person, like, 'damn, this kid is just walking, and I think he's going to shoot me!' He walks past, I look at my friend, and I'm like, 'we just have to run now.'

Plakias: Part of what makes incidents like the one that happened so scary is that of course you would think that something's actually happening. It doesn't seem implausible.

Cardoso: Again, we start with a speed-walk, then once we get to the door to run outside from Shambach to Root, we just start sprinting. And we're, like, laughing as we're running. Even though we are so afraid. We are literally running for our lives, but we're laughing.

Coots: We were updating everyone through our mass notification system, but it wasn't like we were saying, 'now we're entering classroom 101 in Kirner-Johnson.' It wasn't like that. It was just, 'we're continuing the search, and we expanded the search to go from KJ to McEwen to KTSA to Shambach.'That whole complex was searched. And it takes some time. Even with three law enforcement teams searching, it takes a lot of time.

Place: Incidents like this require a large number of resources to efficiently and effectively resolve them. Many people may not realize that just because an incident like this is occurring, other issues arise simultaneously. They may be in the surrounding area, like domestic incidents, robberies, burglaries, or localized. For instance, in this event we had a student with a medical emergency in the dining hall while this was going on that necessitated an ambulance response.

Daves: The state police came by. They got a bunch of us and put us in one of the professors' offices up there and then locked the door, so that way we were in a more secure area. We spent an hour or two in there while they were sweeping.

"I've heard from students who were in rooms, making plans for how to fight the person if they came into the room, or what they were going to do. At a certain point, there are things that no college kid should be asked to think about. No adult. Nobody."

- Professor Alexandra Plakias

Coots: We worked with the state police, the Oneida County Sheriff's Office, the Kirkland Police, the FBI, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, they were all here on campus. We had, I'd say, somewhere between 20 and 25 police officers on campus in a short amount of time. We were able to react, manage, and then finally remove the threat from our campus.

Place: The New York State Police, Kirkland PD, Oneida Sheriff's Department, Encon Police and an FBI agent who lives locally responded. Everyone did an excellent job integrating and following orders.

Coots: Our HERT team, we meet once a month. Even though it's, 'what could you possibly talk about?' But it's so we can react properly and in a timely fashion, so we're properly trained, we know what resources are available. If you say, 'we're going to do it once a year,' you're not ready to go.

Noonan: It was really scary, and really frustrating, because it felt like the school just had not really thought about all the things that could go wrong. It seemed like we were in the worst possible building, because I've never really been in another classroom that has those weird doors and has the bolted-down furniture. It was kind of awful.

Coots: You have to be a special person to know where you're going in KTSA. So it's not as simple as law enforcement showing up and I flip them the keys. What I did is, I had three campus safety officers, who are unarmed—we do not carry guns on this campus—put them in bulletproof vests, and then they were assigned to one of these three law enforcement teams. Because, first of all, they needed to know where to go. Not that they needed to unlock doors, but some of them, the way our locking system works, sometimes it's a card swipe, sometimes it's a key, sometimes you need to jostle the door a little bit to get it open. And the people who know that are the Campus Safety Officers.

Hogan: They sent us an all-clear message. We were kind of emotionally drained. We were freshmen, so we didn't really have cars on campus. But my friend had brought up her car, and we went to Burger King.

Cardoso: As soon as we got that text, we ordered Taco Bell [laughs].

Coots: I did get some pushback from some of the students about the perpetrator. Why did we go to an all-clear without the perpetrator in custody? Because there had been a short time period between the all-clear where you can resume normal duties and activities and the person actually being placed in handcuffs. But we also knew who it was, and [law enforcement] were able to put surveillance on this person while they were developing enough probable cause to make an arrest.

O'Brien: I think very highly of Frank Coots, and I did witness many improvements in campus safety over my four years at Hamilton. He is a standup campus partner, and true ally on campus. I do believe that they will learn from this experience and hopefully such a slip up like the incorrect message won't happen again. I also was happy to see the quick implementation of putting locks on the doors of the KJ classrooms. I did wonder if there was an assessment of what other things Hamilton has overlooked, such as the lockless doors, that makes us more vulnerable to an active

shooter.

Coots: Roughly speaking, it was about four hours from notification to conclusion.

III: "I didn't go to class. Couldn't go to class."

Coots: We were able to identify the perpetrator because of students' actions. The students of this college took it extremely seriously. They wanted, first of all, to be safe, but when they were able to give information to identify the perpetrator, they did that too, without hesitation.

Noonan: Everyone was affected by it, on and off campus. A lot of my friends were in a lab in the Science Center for hours. People were in the Commons basement, or were locked in their room and couldn't get to the bathroom. It went on until 9:30 p.m. on a Sunday, and I had a 9:00 a.m on Monday. It was kind of like, 'really? Is this what we're trying to do here?' Some of my friends are tour guides, and Admissions was super adamant on giving tours that day, because they wanted to show that Hamilton was resilient and that the campus could come together.

Landry: Everybody responds to stress in a different way but I thought getting back to the structure of a typical class day was important. And, equally important was the understanding of faculty and staff to allow students to manage their stress and anxiety the way that worked best for them—which, in some cases, resulted in students missing class to take care of themselves.

Cardoso: I didn't go to class. Couldn't go to class.

Hogan: There's not one proper way to handle something like that, in the aftermath. For some people, what they needed was for everything to go back to normal, and other people needed time. I get what the administration was trying to do, in that they resumed classes, and for some people, that was what they needed. But I do think they should have enforced that professors get rid of assignments for the week, or something like that. I also heard that a lot of people were talking about whether their professors acknowledged it at all.

O'Brien: The decision to not cancel classes the next day I found to be quite abysmal. The reasoning of how others cope better with routine I thought was a bit tone-deaf. Others who cope as such could easily have chosen to go to an on campus study space, and completed homework during the day. I also think this group was largely in the minority. I don't think folks would have complained about a day off.

Noonan: That morning, I remember being in FoJo on dark side, and it was just so eerie being there. Everyone knew that this had happened, obviously, and experienced it in varying ways, but there was just nothing being done, really.

Plakias: I know for a fact that professors were very concerned about how to supporttheir students, and whether or not there was an official policy, I know professors were very willing to do whatever it took to help their students get through it. But at the same time, as professors, we're not mental health professionals.

Kuczek: I think a lot of my professors were very kind about assignments that week and also checked in with us about how we were doing. I remember Amy Gaffney, the OCC director, was especially kind and compassionate for those that were working there during the incident.

Counseling Center Director David Walden: Some students felt relieved that it was only a threat and felt comforted by the support of family and friends. Other students felt a great deal of fear–even referring to it as "the shooting"–and needed deeper support around what it brought up. In the Counseling Center, we were there to listen and support no matter what a student's experience and we were happy to do it in the ways that we could.

Landry: There was a wide variety of reactions. For many, the stress and anxiety carried on for days, weeks, or more. There was certainly an uptick in the use of our support services.

Dani Bernstein '24: Campus was dead. You can feel the general vibes on campus shift through the semester. People get stressed around finals, and right before breaks people are exhausted. The genuine vibe around campus was grief.

Plakias: I know a lot of people had thoughts about the administration's decision not to cancel classes or whatever, but at a certain point, there are days when I think no one should go to school again until we fix this. Why are we still doing this and pretending like it's okay when it's not?

Hogan: Everyone was looking into [the perpetrator's] life, and looking into who he was, and what he was involved with on campus. People were obsessed with who he was. Making assumptions, for sure. Everyone was like, 'oh my god, he's from Kentucky, he must be so conservative, he must not understand how fucked up this whole thing is.' People made assumptions about him, but I think his actions can imply a certain thing about his character.

Coots: The [perpetrator] was still a student here. As an administrator, I always have to be careful that I don't reveal too much information that violates their sense of privacy, their confidentiality, and that I'm not violating any type of educational laws. I had conversations with them. I was with them a lot the next day. They were embarrassed. I think that's a fair word to use. It was something really stupid they said. I have yet to meet a person on the face of this earth that has not said something stupid in their life. We all say stupid things, we all say things that we regret. Unfortunately, some of them reach a level where it is inexcusable. And I think in this situation they had to be held accountable. They have to be, because it disrupted so many lives, it used so many resources. And I still think that there are people who it affects to this day.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DANI BERNSTEIN

A public art display was created by Dani Bernstein '24 and Freya Langenberg '24 with contributions from many community members.

Hogan: I know he dropped out of school before he could get expelled, so I don't know anything about the consequences he'll face with the school. I don't want to say he doesn't deserve a second chance, because I don't know him, I don't know if he's the kind of person who's going to grow from this, or think that he's been wronged by getting in trouble. I don't know anything about him and how he reacted. But I really hope that he- [pauses] I literally can't get over how fucking stupid you have to be to post something like that.

Plakias: I think there was a lot of focus on Jodel. This problem existed for a long time before Jodel, and even if we got rid of Jodel, it would still be there. People have been making threats for a long time.

"I literally can't get over how fucking stupid you have to be to post something like that."
- Caroline Hogan '26

Cardoso: I try not to [think about it]. It's easier that way, I think. I've definitely gotten a lot better about going through the spaces I was in at the time without feeling this intense dread.

O'Brien: I think my most specific memory of that time was my panic and re-traumatization from receiving that text in

that smoothie shop. I honestly don't think I would go back there because of how sad and scary that was for me as a victim of gun violence.

Place: I suspect each student had their own unique feelings and experience. I would suspect some students couldn't care less about the incident and viewed it as a bother. I also suspect some students were likely traumatized by the event and maybe it's still impacting them.

Coots: I still have it. I still have the message. It angers me. First of all, that it happened here. It doesn't happen here. I'm not naive. I spent 34 years of my life in law enforcement, and I've seen a lot of things, and I've been involved with mass shootings. I'm not naive. But I come here, and I want it to be safe, and I started this conversation by saying I feel like I let people down because I could not ensure that that wasn't going to happen on our campus. As much as I wanted to say, 'it'll never happen here!' I knew in my mind and in my heart that absolutely, it could happen here. And it did happen here.

IV: "We're reacting to violence as opposed to preventing violence."

Plakias: When I was a high school senior and there was the first [school] shooting—maybe not the first ever, but the first to really break into public awareness—it was such a shocking thing. It felt like a shocking aberration. It didn't feel like something that could happen to you any day, at any time. And now it feels like something we've been asked to learn to live with.

Hogan: Personally, politically, I will never understand when people blame it on mental health. Guns can be controlled. I come from a background where no one close to me owns a gun, so I don't view it as a value. And I know that that's different for people across the U.S., so I can't speak on people's reasoning. But I can't fathom how people don't want to change regulations and prevent people who shouldn't have guns from having guns.

Plakias: There's a pickup truck sometimes I see at my kids' school parking lot. It has a bumper sticker on it that says 'Fuck Cuomo,' but the "k" is an automatic weapon. And I'm like, 'this is a kids' school. Do you really believe that your kid is safer because of automatic weapons?'

Coots: As Americans, we're reacting to violence as opposed to preventing violence.

Hogan: My friend from home goes to UVA. A student killed three football players. I went to visit her during spring break, and just off campus at a bar, there was a shooting, that night I was with her. Obviously terrifying, but to watch her and all of her floormates, even though we were in the dorm, react to what was happening--they were freaking out. They had experienced real trauma. That all happened twice to my friend, to her community. Even though I personally knew very soon into the whole experience that we were safe, it was kind of like, 'this actually could've happened, and can actually happen at any time.'

Bernstein: There was a shooting at my sister's school a couple months ago, where maybe 16 to 20 people passed away in that general area. It's horrifying that this violence is all around us and is so normalized.

Plakias: It's been, what, twenty years plus since Columbine? It'll be 25 years next year. We should have dealt with it right there. But when Columbine happened, people wanted to blame video games, people wanted to blame...I don't know, Satanic music. We ignored the fact that there was a very obvious reason why it happened, which was the availability of guns. And now 25 years later, it's happening all the time, we've completely failed to solve the problem, and we've just asked you guys to accept lockdown drills, and at the same time, we kind of bemoan your need for mental health accommodations.

O'Brien: If there is anything we learned from this event, it would be that a mass shooting is completely capable of happening on the Hill. It's becoming a reality of living in America, and being prepared for it in any way we can should be investigated.

Plakias: It's something that I think about that could happen any day, every day when I give my kids a kiss. That's outrageous.

Plakias: There have been so many breaking points. Sandy Hook. There have been so many inflection points where it seemed like surely, something has to give now. Surely, something has to change. And it never does.

Cardoso: At the start of the summer, I was home, and my mom was like, 'oh, no! There was a shooting on the beach.' There's a boardwalk at the beach near my house that I would go to all the time as a kid with my friends. I couldn't quite drive yet, but some of my friends could, so we would all go to this one place and eat pizza and play Truth or Dare. So she says, 'oh no, there was a shooting on the beach, right on this spot where you used to hang out all the time.' I froze, and I couldn't say anything back, and I just started crying. Just because of the realization that you can't really escape violence no matter where you are.

Coots: My right to live should not take a backseat to someone's right to possess a firearm.

Interviews have been condensed for clarity.

Bearing witness to incarcerated women in the "Land of the Free"

by Sadie Chase-Tatko '25
NEWS EDITOR

This semester, I took a class with Professor Doran Larson called "Curating Prison Witness." For years, Professor Larson has dedicated his time and passion to bearing witness to the atrocities committed by the United States incarceration system after his exposure to the issues through a creative writing course he taught at Attica Correctional Facility. In this course, he introduced us to the American Prison Writing Archive, a space he dedicated to all who care to read the submissions he gathers from incarcerated individuals around the country.

Throughout this course, I have read many collections of prison writing and organic stories in the archive, and the strikingly traumatic experience of women in prison really stood out to me. Though women make up a minority of the United States incarceration system at around 7% of the incarcerated population, this number is rising quicker than that of incarcerated men. Few people are aware of the atrocities of the United States incarceration system, which adds to the efficacy of the system.

In an effort to bear witness to the human rights abuses United States prisons commit towards women, Ayelet Waldeman and Robin Levi interviewed incarcerated women across the United States, compiling *Inside This Place, Not Of It* with harrowing, nonetheless real, stories of the narrators they met. I read this collection with a dwindling sense of grit and a crystalized reality of my rights as a woman outside the walls of America's prisons. Rampant sexual violence, medical maltreatment and the struggle to find a voice are a few themes the women touch on.

For the crime of faking refunds at Pep Boys to pay her bills as a single, pregnant mother of two boys, Olivia Hamilton served 18 months. The experience of Olivia's birth in prison includes a prison doctor forcibly inducing her, shackles on her swollen ankles during the late stages of active labor and a non-consensual Cesarean section. The United States incarceration system is built on a model specified for males, leaving prison medical care greatly lacking specializations in obstetrics and gynecology, creating a rise in preventable female-specific diseases and inadequate reproductive care. There is also a dire need for reproductive justice, to avoid the separation of mothers from their infants and to ensure that their children are not displaced outside of the prison.

After a childhood filled with rampant sexual and violent abuse from her mother's partner, Teri Hancock was later sentenced to four to fourteen years in prison after serving her initial 2 years, where she was subject to even more violent and sexual abuse at the hands of prison staff. According to a study done by Human Rights Watch, more than 50% of all incarcerated women have experienced some form of sexual abuse prior to incarceration. Once in prison, these women have limited access to trauma care, counseling and support services. Combined with more sexual abuse at the hands of prison staff and unsatisfactory prison living conditions, the prison exacerbates negative health outcomes and poor mental health.

Olivia and Teri's stories, which bear witness to the extreme trauma they experienced both before and during incarceration, is the horrifyingly common truth of incarcerated women throughout the fifty states. Giving space and time to the words of these incarcerated women is only the first step in enacting change in our twisted system of justice. Serving time in prison is supposed to be the only punishment, yet our incarceration system does not stop there. Sexual violence, medical maltreatment and crimes against human rights are the additional punishments for commiting a crime in the United States, civilly tucked away behind concrete walls and metal bars.

Why should you care? Reading about horrible practices in the world can often feel hauntingly sad and overwhelmingly unassociated to you, but the malicious treatment of women incarcerated in the United States is happening all around us. Attica Correctional Facility, although a prison for men, is a mere few hours away. The Attica Uprising in 1971, where incarcerated people revolted to demand better living conditions and political rights and resulted in dozens of people murdered, happened a mere few hours away. In most cases, incarcerated people did commit a crime, but the problem is they might not be convicted for the crime they actually committed, and the United States has an arbitrary and racist judicial system that criminalizes things most countries do not. The War on Drugs, for example, only increased and stiffened the penalties for drug possession and trafficking, overcrowded United States' prisons and disproportionately criminalized people of color. Meanwhile, the War on Drugs did effectively nothing to combat drugs.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN PRISON WRITING ARCHIVE

As described on their website, "The mission of the American Prison Writing Archive (APWA) is to replace misrepresentation of prisons and imprisoned people with first-person witness by those living on the receiving end of failed systems and enduring inequality... The Archive is built on the belief that incarcerated people are always the leading experts on practices and policy of legal confinement's effects. They can offer a generative index of state and civil society's (mis)managing of criminal legal systems and public safety."

Bearing witness to the atrocities committed in the "land of the free" is the first step toward

holding the system accountable and unveiling its own crimes. To bear witness to a few of the many women incarcerated in the United States today, please read Waldeman and Levi's *Inside This Place, Not Of It*. To learn more about the United States' brutal racist history that pipelined into today's carceral system, read Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. To read many more stories of incarcerated people, visit the American Prison Writing Archive at prisonwitness.org.

WHICH HAMILTON DORM SUITS YOU BEST?

Find out which Hamilton dorm suits you best in this fun little quiz! This quiz assesses you both in terms of dorm preferences and in personality. Answer honestly and circle your answer in each question. Each answer has colors next to them, tally up how much you get of each and at the end, mix them all together! For example, if you answer (A) to the first question, put a tally for yellow and blue. If an answer has multiple of the same color, count each colored circle as its own tally.

1. How much do you care about where you live?
   a. A lot
   b. A median amount
   c. Doesn't really matter
2. Are you athletic?
   a. Yes, I am in an intercollegiate sports team
   b. Yes, I am in Ultimate Frisbee or Club Soccer
   c. Yes, I regularly exercise but am not in a team
   d. Nah
3. How many of your classes are in KJ?
   a. 0
   b. 1
   c. 2
   d. 3
   e. 4
4. Where was your freshman year dorm?
   a. Light Side
   b. Dark Side
   c. Grey Side
5. Thoughts on living down the Hill?
   a. Absolutely not
   b. I don't care
   c. Yes, it would be nice
6. Are you straight?
   a. Yes
   b. No
7. What are you most likely to do on the weekends?
   a. Party
   b. Games (board games, TTRPGS, video games, etc.)
   c. Drinking with friends in a lowkey get-together
   d. Study
8. When do you wake up in the morning?
   a. Before 7 am
   b. 7- 9 am
   c. Anytime after 9 am
9. When do you sleep at night?
   a. 11pm or before
   b. Around midnight to 1 am
   c. Egegriously late
10. Preferred noise level?
    a. Little to no noise
    b. Don't care
11. What is your priority when it comes to housing?
    a. Location
    b. Room size
    c. Housing Type (sub-free, quiet floor, special interest, apartment-style, suite)
12. Introvert , Extrovert , or Ambivert?
13. Ideal room type?
    a. Single
    b. Double
    c. Triple
    d. Quad
14. Thoughts on the waffle ceilings?
    a. Nice
    b. Ugly
    c. I don't care

Count up the tallies for all your colors! Look at the answers below to see which dorm you are. "A lot, "some," and "low" are subjective and relative terms, and you can decide for yourself what that means.

Babbitt Allbaugh: A lot of red, a lot of yellow, low blue

Bundy: Some red, low yellow, a lot of blue

Cartwright: Some red, some yellow, a lot of blue

Ellis-Ferguson: Equal amount of red and blue, some yellow

Gerald: Some red, low yellow, a lot of blue

Kirkland: Low red, a lot of yellow and blue (at least one white)

Mac: Low red, a lot of yellow and blue (at least one black)

Root-Minor: Some red, a lot of yellow, some blue

Rogers: Low red, low yellow, a lot of blue

Skeir: Some red, some yellow, a lot of blue

Sould: A lot of red, some yellow, some blue

Looking into the word of 2023: "rizz"

by Gregoire Winston '26
OPINION EDITOR

Do you have "W rizz"? Would you consider yourself a Certified Rizzler? Were you blessed with the power of unspoken rizz?

The Oxford English Dictionary has crowned rizz as its word of the year, surpassing "Swiftie" and "situationship" to earn the esteemed recognition. In 2022, the COVID-19 pandemic gave rise to "goblin mode" and "vax" in 2021. For anyone over 30 reading this, frowning at the meaning of rizz might be more than understandable. Gen Alpha has begun its well-expected generational right of passage: the enrichment of the English lexicon through its own use of slang. As such, "gyat," "rizzler," "sigma," "smash," and "Fanum tax" have cemented themselves within the teenage vernacular. Thanks to social media, namely TikTok, young children have entered a new age of communication extensively reliant on the latest internet trends. With the span of a few clicks, a seemingly benign term can amass millions of views and suddenly stand at the forefront of a generational cultural phenomenon. That being said, it's time to brush up on your modern-day conversational skills. Where does rizz come from, what celebrities have popularized the term and in what circumstances would one use the word?

The word rizz is believed to be shorthand for charisma; Oxford defines it as "style, charm, or attractiveness." Being able to charmingly pursue someone romantically would be considered rizz. Twitch streamer and Youtuber Kai Cenat popularized the term in 2021, given his 8 million follower base on the streaming platform. Recently, his reach on the internet spilled into reality: Cenat notably incited a riot in Manhattan after he promised to hand out free video game consoles, drawing thousands of avid fans to Union Square Park. Yet, once debunked, this false promise erupted into mayhem in the streets, causing public disturbance and requiring the NYPD to intervene. Cenat's initial understanding of rizz involves being slick with words and turning an unfavorable romantic situation around. With time, expansion across social media platforms has shifted rizz's initial meaning, much to the displeasure of Cenat. He stated "They butchered it; they killed it" while on the No Jumper Podcast. For him, rizz goes beyond having good looks or flirting with someone in your league, it involves "the hero's journey from underdog to successful lover." Today, that connotation has been lost. Whether you are flirting with someone you perceive as realistically attainable or not, successfully hitting on them is considered rizz. Basically, rizz is game, and game is rizz.

Within the celebrity world, rizz has spread through the ranks and infiltrated the colloquial speech of countless actors, TV personalities and movie stars. In June 2022, English actor Tom Holland was interviewed by Buzzfeed and asked about his relationship with fellow actress Zendaya. Holland declared having "no rizz whatsoever." Social media blew up in the following hours, spawning a frenzy of Tom Holland memes making fun of the actor's personal acknowledgment. And thus, rizz blew up, and so did any lasting figment of Holland's dignity. A year later, Louisiana State University gymnast and TikTok celebrity Olivia Dunne met Baby Gronk, the number one college football prospect in the nation, at LSU while recording a potentially-trending video. In it, she imitated meeting Baby Gronk for the first time, hugged him and posed for a picture together. She attempted to convince the current high-schooler to commit to LSU in a few years, which he agreed to. In the hours following, the Internet was quick to label the interaction as "Livvy rizzed up Baby Gronk." Tom Hanks and George Clooney have also adopted the term. On BBC's The One Show, the actors discussed their upcoming cinematic projects and agreed that "if you claim to have rizz, you do not have it. It has to be placed upon you." A few seconds later, he added that "if you make that statement, you clearly have rizz" drawing a chuckle from the crowd. In December 2022, NBA sports journalist Shams Charania spoke to Kay Adams on "Up and Adams" about the Internet deeming him worthy of "rizz god" status. Despite not completely understanding the significance of his unofficial title, Charania accepted the recognition and noted that he "is focused on his work, not here to speak on his game. Let them say what they want to say, but I'll take the compliment."

Over months of deliberation and collaboration from 30,000 language lovers worldwide, employed by Oxford themselves, the Word of the Year has undoubtedly left its mark on society. Rizz goes beyond a term your middle school brother would use–rather, it stands as a testament to linguistic evolution and the gears of our modern-day culture. Words and phrases directly taken from Internet have seeped into mainstream culture, for better or for worse. Like so many of its predecessors, will rizz stand the test of time or be replaced by the next generational wave of vernacular terms? Only time will tell.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MARCA

Twitch Streamer Kai Cenat was the first celebrity to publicly use the word "rizz" while on livestream in 2021.

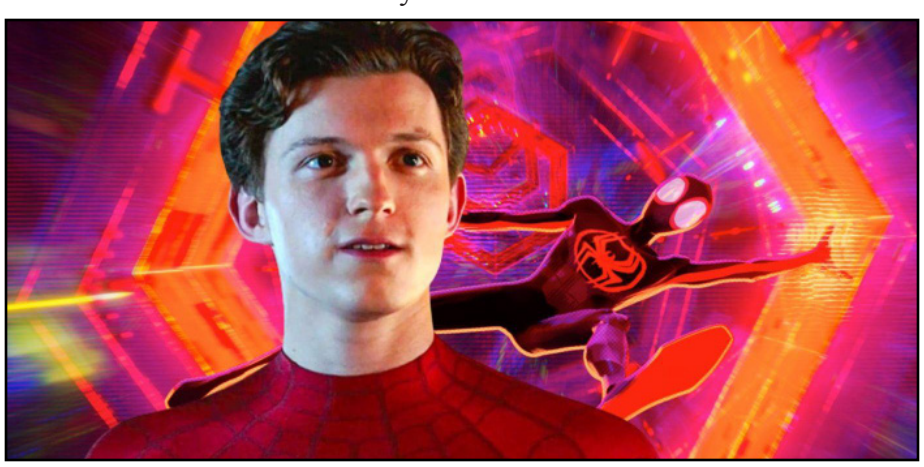

PHOTO COURTESY OF NEWSSTARS

Tom Holland used the term "rizz" when asked about being in a relationship with fellow TV star Zendaya.

The Matthew McConaughey study guide

by Grace Policelli '24
STAFF WRITER

Hamilton recently announced that the next visitor in the Great Names Speaker Series will be Matthew McConaughey on April 18 in the Field House. Like many students, I found myself starstruck at the thought of being in the same room as A-List celebrity Matthew McConaughey. As finals approach and we all desperately search for ways to study without studying, here are a few ways you can "study" for McConaughey's upcoming visit:

1. *How To Lose a Guy in 10 Days* is arguably one of the most iconic romantic comedies of our time, from Kate Hudson's iconic backless yellow dress to the performance of the song "You're So Vain" that recently made a resurgence on TikTok. This movie follows two ambitious New Yorkers who are willing to risk anything for their jobs, even matters of the heart. Hilarious in its absurdity and yet endearing in Hudson's and McConaughey's delivery and chemistry, *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days* is a must-watch.

2. Romantic comedies aren't for you? Don't worry, McConaughey has something for everyone, even the Wall-Street wannabes. *The Wolf of Wall Street* follows the debaucherous life of Jordan Belfort, a former stockbroker who lived a life of wealth, corruption and drugs. The infamous scene between Leonardo DiCaprio and McConaughey when they thump their chests and hum, as a sort of war cry for these financial elites, was actually improvised by McConaughey during filming. He later revealed that this is actually an acting warm-up technique that he practices prior to shooting, but felt that it fit with his character. This film, although three hours long and explicit in more ways than one, has become a cultural cornerstone of modern cinema, and is definitely worth the watch

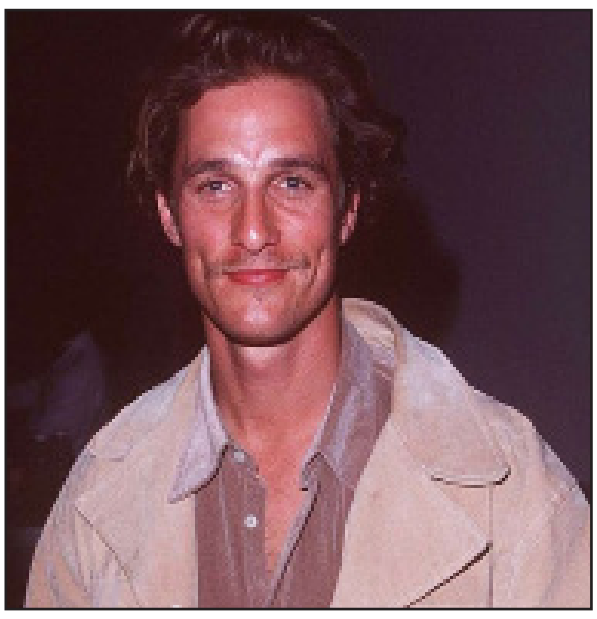

PHOTO COURTESY OF BEAUMONT ENTERPRISE

McConaughey also has two Emmy nominations for his lead role in *True Detective* on HBO.

3. So maybe romantic comedies are for you, but you've already seen *How To Lose a Guy in 10 Days*. The lesser-known adventure-romance *Fool's Gold* once again stars dynamic duo Kate Hudson and Matthew McConaughey, bringing their natural on-screen chemistry to this treasure hunt. The movie follows an on-the-rocks couple in the pursuit of treasure, quickly devolving into adventure and relationship chaos. This movie was loosely based on a true story of Mel Fisher's search for sunken treasure. *Fool's Gold* is perfect for fans of *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days* who are looking for something similar, or for those who prefer their romantic comedies to also be action packed.

4. In order to capture McConaughey's range as an actor, *Dallas Buyers Club* is a must. His Oscar winning performance in *Dallas* portrays the life of AIDS patient Ron Woodruff in the 1980s. This emotionally raw film exposes government hypocrisy in their approach to HIV and AIDS policies, leaning heavily on McConaughey's emotional range as an actor. He also had to lose over 50 pounds for the role. In an interview, McConaughey said "Ron was an American original, He shook a tree. He made a noise. I said, 'I want to get this made, get Ron's story told.'" This moving portrayal of a dark period in American history is a phenomenal movie and important story that needed to be told, and marks one of the most important triumphs of McConaughey's career.

5. McConaughey's activism does not just pertain to stories he tells on the screen; he also co-founded the just keep livin Foundation with his wife, a nonprofit committed to helping young high school students make healthy life choices. Operating in over 16 cities for over 3,000 students, the name "just keep livin" comes from McConaughey's life motto following the passing of his father. Despite McConaughey's impact on society from his iconic roles, his commitment to philanthropy is a lesser-known passion. Learning about—and possibly contributing to—these initiatives is a great way to orient this Oscar-winner within the realm of the real world.

6. Movies aren't the only thing that students can immerse themselves in prior to McConaughey's arrival. His 2020 book *Greenlights* contains life stories and lessons, all told with a deeply witty voice and compelling sense of introspection. This book is not only refreshingly honest, but it highlights the underbelly of McConaughey's life from childhood up to present day, humanizing this cultural icon into just someone else doing their best. Additionally, McConaughey narrates his own book on Audible, and his storytelling abilities shine through this personalized rendition of his book.

7. If you (like most of us) are in the business of finding new ways to relax, McConaughey reads several meditation scripts for the Calm app. From breathing exercises, mood evaluations and guided meditations, this app offers one way to take a break from the busy holiday (and finals) season. McConaughey's soothing southern charm translates perfectly through his meditation recordings, offering yet another avenue to prepare for his spring visit to the Hill.

8. In a similar vein of relaxation, if you're in the mood for something with lower stakes, the animated movies *Sing* and *Sing 2* feature Matthew McConaughey as Buster Moon, a koala with dreams of being famous. These lighthearted family films are a great way to watch some of McConaughey's work in a feel-good atmosphere. Additionally, *Sing 2* features his daughter Vida at just eleven years old. Her character is a piglet scuba diving in chocolate. This endearing family-filled project is sure to warm hearts and entertain just the same.

9. However, if wholesome is not your vibe, there's always *Magic Mike*. This 2012 blockbuster follows a group of male strippers, with actors like Channing Tatum, Matt Bomber, and of course, Matthew McConaughey. This movie is partly inspired by Channing Tatum's real life. Although not the main character, McConaughey's performance as the cowboy stripper is definitely one of his most well known costumes.

10. And lastly, if impending adulthood makes you nostalgic for high school shenanigans, or if you're simply interested in McConaughey's breakthrough role, *Dazed and Confused* follows high schoolers on the last day of school in 1976. This 1993 coming of age film includes the iconic line "Alright alright alright" that McConaughey is asked to repeat on interviews and by fans to this day

If you follow these ten steps, you'll be sure to be prepared for McConaughey's visit this spring!

BY: MAX BRATTER ‘25 - *A&E EDITOR*

A&E TOP 23 ALBUMS OF 2023

1. Space Heavy - King Krule
2. Maps - billy woods & Kenny Segal
3. SCARING THE H**S - JPEGMAFIA & Danny Brown
4. Quaranta - Danny Brown
5. Ganger - Veeze
6. UTOPIA - Travis Scott
7. My Soft Machine - Arlo Parks
8. This Is Why - Paramore
9. The Patience - Mick Jenkins
10. VOIR DIRE - Earl Sweatshirt & The Alchemist
11. NEVER ENOUGH - Daniel Caesar
12. Lahai - Sampha
13. Glockoma 2 - Key Glock
14. A Great Chaos - Ken Carson
15. And Then You Pray For Me - Westside Gunn
16. boygenius - boygenius
17. everything is alive - Slowdive
18. I Told Them... Burna Boy
19. KAYTRAMINÉ - KAYTRAMINÉ
20. Calico - Ryan Beatty
21. Burning Desire - MIKE
22. AftërLyfe - Yeat
23. We Buy Diabetic Test Strips - Armand Hammer

Hamilton Continentals sports roundup

by Owen Lewis ’24
SPORTS EDITOR

In a great week for Hamilton sports, both hockey teams scored wins, women’s basketball maintained their undefeated run, and both men’s and women’s swimming made excellent showings at an invitational meet. Here, *The Spectator* presents a roundup of recent results and dates of future games. Though this is an extremely busy time in the semester, why not take advantage of breaks in studying and writing by catching a game?

PHOTO COURTESY OFJOSH MCKEE

Jade Matthias ’26 won four individual events in an invitatonal on Dec. 3.

Women’s hockey

The Continentals earned a 2-1 overtime win over the Nazareth Golden Flyers on Dec. 5 in the Sage Rink. Nazareth scored on their very first shot on goal to take a 1-0 lead, but Hamilton’s defense shut them out for the rest of the game, helped by goalie Mac Donovan ’26 stopping 18 shots on goal. Claire McGennis ’24 tied the score with a few minutes left in the first period, and Abby Smith ’24 delivered the game-winner barely over 30 seconds into overtime. With the win, the Continentals move to 4-2-1, but with their last loss coming way back in their second game this season, they have considerable momentum as they move forward. The Continentals, ranked 8th, will have a huge test ahead of them on Dec. 9 at 3 p.m. as they host unbeaten, 7th-ranked Utica. Be sure not to miss it!

Women’s basketball

The still-undefeated women’s basketball team dominated a mismatch against the winless Fisher College on Dec. 2, 60-20. The Continentals jumped out to a 21-2 lead after the first quarter and the pace of their attack slowed only slightly thereafter, more than doubling their advantage by the end of the game. Taylor Lambo ’26, Sam Glickman ’25 and Maria Mercado Rengel ’24 all scored at least 10 points. The team’s 8-0 start is the best since the 2017-2018 season and the second undefeated stretch through the first eight games of the season in the team’s history. As of the publication of this issue, the Continentals will have clashed with SUNY Brockport with hopes of keeping their unbeaten run going.

Men’s hockey

Goalie Charlie Archer ’25 shone in the Continentals’ 2-0 victory against the Wesleyan University Cardinals in an away game on Dec. 3. Devon de Vries ’27 and Max Bulawka ’26 ensured that the strong defensive showing counted by slotting in a goal each. The Continentals are now 5-1, with their lone loss coming against Trinity College. The team is staying on the road with another away game against Middlebury College on Dec. 8 at 7 p.m.

Men’s basketball

The Continentals took a tough 82-60 loss against the University of Rochester Yellowjackets on Dec. 3, their fourth loss to two wins so far this season. Hamilton had an early 26-20 lead and were within sniffing distance at 37-30 down at the end of the first half, but the Yellowjackets pulled away in the second half. Regardless of the loss, Teja Singh ’24 excelled with 24 points, and Hank Morgan ’25 scored 16 points to maintain a NESCAC-best average of 18.4 points per game. The Continentals are up against Utica University on Dec. 7 at 7 p.m.

Men’s swimming

At the unfortunately named Bomber Invitational at Ithaca College on Dec. 3, the Continentals placed third out of 10 teams. Nathaniel Taft ’27 swam his way to a new school record in the 200 freestyle, 1:40:52, which was more than enough to win the event. The old record had stood for more than 20 years. Jack Jee ’24 set a school record himself, his fourth in total, by winning the 100 individual medley with a time of 52:47. On Dec. 8 at 5 p.m., the Continentals face off against Colgate at home. Ring in the weekend by cheering on your friends and peers!

Women’s swimming

The women’s team earned a second-place finish at the 11-team Bomber Invitational. Jade Matthias ’26 was the star of the day, showing incredible versatility in winning four individual events: 50 freestyle, 100 butterfly, 100 backstroke and 100 individual medley. She also took part in four relays, each of which the Continentals won—the 200 and 400 freestyle and medley relays. Like the men, you can watch the women face off against Colgate at the Bristol Pool at 5 p.m. on Dec. 8.

PHOTO COURTESY OFJOSH MCKEE

Charlie Archer ’25 had a great day in net to help secure a shutout win.